

Tularemia (*Francisella tularensis*)

2017 Case Definition

CSTE Position Statement(s)

16-ID-11

Clinical Criteria

An illness characterized by several distinct forms, including the following:

- Ulceroglandular: cutaneous ulcer with regional lymphadenopathy
- Glandular: regional lymphadenopathy with no ulcer
- Oculoglandular: conjunctivitis with preauricular lymphadenopathy
- Oropharyngeal: stomatitis or pharyngitis or tonsillitis and cervical lymphadenopathy
- Pneumonic: primary pulmonary disease
- Typhoidal: febrile illness without localizing signs and symptoms

Laboratory Criteria for Diagnosis

Supportive

- Elevated serum antibody titer(s) to *F. tularensis* antigen (without documented fourfold or greater change) in a patient with no history of tularemia vaccination, **OR**
- Detection of *F. tularensis* in a clinical or autopsy specimen by fluorescent assay, **OR**
- Detection of *F. tularensis* in a clinical or autopsy specimen by a polymerase chain reaction (PCR)

Confirmatory

- Isolation of *F. tularensis* in a clinical or autopsy specimen, **OR**
- Fourfold or greater change in serum antibody titer to *F. tularensis* antigen between acute and convalescent specimens

Epidemiologic Linkage

Clinical diagnosis is supported by evidence or history of a tick or deerfly bite, exposure to tissues of a mammalian host of *F. tularensis*, including via an animal bite, or exposure to potentially contaminated water.

Criteria to Distinguish a New Case from an Existing Case

Serial or subsequent cases of tularemia experienced by one individual should only be counted if there is an additional epidemiologically compatible exposure and new onset of symptoms. Because the duration of antibodies to *F. tularensis* is not known, mere presence of antibodies without a clinically-compatible illness **AND** an epidemiologically compatible exposure within 12 months of onset may not indicate a new infection, especially among persons who live in endemic areas.

Case Classification

Probable

A clinically-compatible case with supportive laboratory evidence.

Confirmed

A clinically-compatible case with confirmatory laboratory evidence.